

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Previously presented) A latch mechanism for selectively latching a door to an automotive vehicle, said latch mechanism comprising:

a latch hook movable between a locked position and an unlocked position;

a release lever operatively coupled to said latch hook for selectively moving said latch hook between said locked and unlocked positions; and

an inertia lever engagable with said release lever to prevent movement of said latch hook between said locked and unlocked positions, said inertia lever movably supported within said latch mechanism for moving in and out of engagement with said release lever in response to a side impact upon the vehicle;

wherein said release lever includes a slot presenting sides for engaging a portion of said inertia lever for automatically toggling said inertia lever in response to movement of said release lever to prevent seizing of said inertia lever within the latch mechanism.

2. (Original) A latch mechanism according to claim 1 including means for biasing said inertia lever to a first position out of engagement with said release lever.

3. (Previously presented) A latch mechanism according to claim 2, wherein said inertia lever includes a tab and said slot of said release lever is aligned with and engages said tab when said release lever is actuated to unlock said latch hook when said inertia lever is in said first position.

4. (Original) A latch mechanism according to claim 3, wherein upon side impact said inertia lever moves to a second position such that said tab is not aligned with said slot.

5. (Original) A latch mechanism according to claim 4, wherein said inertia lever is pivotally mounted within said latch mechanism.

6. (Cancelled)

7. (Currently amended) A latch mechanism for selectively latching a door to an automotive vehicle, said latch mechanism comprising:

a housing including a first side and an opposite second side;

a latch hook ~~mounted~~ disposed on said first side of said housing and movable between a locked position and an unlocked position;

a release lever ~~mounted~~ disposed on said second side of said housing and operatively coupled to said latch hook for selectively moving said latch hook between said locked and unlocked positions; and

an inertia lever engagable with said release lever to prevent movement of said latch hook between said locked and unlocked positions, said inertia lever movably supported on said second side of said housing for moving in and out of engagement with said release lever in response to a side impact upon the vehicle;

wherein said release lever includes a slot presenting sides for engaging a portion of said inertia lever for automatically toggling said inertia lever in response to movement of said release lever to prevent seizing of said inertia lever within the latch mechanism.